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HR SPECIALISTS ENCOURAGED TO ALLOW “CONDITIONAL ACCEPTS”

Human Resources (HR) specialists are encouraged to “conditionally” accept applications when appropriate. Frequently, conditional accepts are utilized after an application has been reviewed and meets the minimum requirements, but the applicant neglected to submit a copy of college transcripts for verification of degree or coursework. [*Read or Print Article*](#)

OPEN ENROLLMENT IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

As we roll into the New Year, it’s time for state employees to start thinking about benefits Open Enrollment. Even though it’s still three months away, the open enrollment period will be “full positive” this year, meaning every employee who is insured will need to review and re-elect their benefits package, or face being excluded from any plan – NO employees will be allowed to automatically roll over into their current plan, even though that plan may not change. [*Read or Print Article*](#)

KEEPING WRITTEN OBJECTIVE EXAMS LEGITIMATE

The authority to establish procedures for examination scoring and construct written objective examinations remains exclusively with the Director of the Division of Human Resources (DHR) in the Department of Personnel & Administration. This means that even though several departments have worked closely with DHR to develop written objective exam items, DHR retains the final review of every written objective exam item and exam. [*Read or Print Article*](#)

THE WRONG SHOES ARE A BIG CAUSE OF WORKPLACE-RELATED INJURIES

Take a quick look at your shoes. Notice anything? If you’re like most Americans, you chose fashion over functionality. In fact, most of us purchase shoes that are intended for both work and play. That is where the problem begins. It would be impractical to play basketball in a pair of dress shoes. You want a basketball shoe that is lightweight, cushioned, and that stabilizes the foot and ankle. [*Read or Print Article*](#)

General Announcements

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Performance Management Web site, colorado.gov/dpa/dhr/oversight/perfpay.htm, has been divided into six different categories:

- A library of resources
- Approved department performance pay programs
- Performance management and pay system requirements

- Standard definitions of the three performance ratings levels
- 2007 performance pay and ratings results
- Historical performance pay and ratings results

Thank you to those departments that submitted their updated Departmental Performance Pay Program last year. The Consulting Services Unit is working on reviewing, approving, and posting those that have been submitted and/or revised. Thank you for patience during this review process. If you have any questions, please email tina.miller@state.co.us

PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS AT THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

As more State employees become aware of the pre-retirement seminars offered through the Professional Development Center, several common questions are raised. These have included inquiries about fees, locations, and how the vendor delivering the seminars was chosen.

According to State statute 24-50-203, the Department of Personnel & Administration must provide continuous pre-retirement education and counseling for State employees. DPA has been offering these seminars through a private vendor for nearly 20 years. A fee has always been associated with the workshops because the State training program is cash funded and must recover costs in order to continue to meet the statutory requirement.

In early 2007, the Professional Development Center issued a new request for proposals for delivering these seminars. The purpose of the RFP was to ensure quality control and avoid the potential for direct marketing of particular financial products and services to State employees. Following the review process, Strategic Financial Partners was awarded the contract for providing three levels of pre-retirement workshops. The contract stipulates that the seminars are for educational purposes only and the collection of any employee identification information is strictly forbidden. In addition, no direct outreach or marketing of particular financial products is permitted. Specific financial advice or recommendations are never given. Employees may choose to enlist the services of the presenters or other financial planning organizations at their discretion, but are not contacted for follow up without their permission.

The pre-retirement seminars are strictly voluntary and include education about building a comprehensive savings, retirement, and estate package. PERA and the other State retirement options are discussed, but are not the primary focus. Employees should be aware of the education and counseling services offered through PERA as an option for additional or alternative information.

Some departments may choose to invite financial organizations in to present “free” retirement seminars. These generally are neither regulated nor screened by any State process and should be scheduled with caution. The advantages of the Professional Development Center seminars include the careful screening of both the vendor qualifications and review and control of the content and sales practices.

The pre-retirement seminars are offered bi-monthly at the Professional Development Center located at 1313 Sherman Street in Denver. The schedule can be viewed at the PDC Web page. If your agency is interested in hosting the seminars in other parts of the State, please contact the PDC at prsnl.training@state.co.us. Any questions or concerns can be directed to David Remson, State Training Administrator, at david.remson@state.co.us.

RETIREMENT WEB SITE REDESIGNED

The Retirement Web site (part of the Employee Benefits Website) has been redesigned for better navigation and employee ease-of-use.

As the decisions for retirement have become increasingly complex over the last few years, especially with the addition of Retirement Choice for new employees, the former site design had outgrown its usefulness. What had started as a simple site had grown into a lengthy laundry list of confusing links and documents.

The Web site starts by clearly delineating the two types of retirement plans to be considered: 1) Basic plans (a mandatory choice for new hires); and 2) Supplemental plans (optional plans available to new and existing employees alike). From there the user can dig further into each plan and the options contained in each, with brief summaries, side-by-side comparisons, FAQs, and legal documents for the plans available in an easy-to-find manner.

The new site will improve the process and information gathering for new employees (remember, they only have 60 calendar days to make their lifetime Retirement Choice decision) as well as existing employees (who probably need to be saving more for retirement in the State's 457 Supplemental Retirement Plan).

Please take a few minutes to visit and look around the new Retirement site by going to the Employee Benefits site – www.colorado.gov/dpa/dhr/benefits - and clicking on the "Retirement" button. More importantly, let employees know about it.

For more information about the State's retirement plans, please contact Suzanne Kubec, Plan Administrator, at 303-866-3954 or suzanne.kubec@state.co.us.

PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACTS PCP SCHEDULED

Personal Services Contracts PCP Level I is scheduled for **Monday, February 25, 2008 at 1313 Sherman in room 220 from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.** Level I is basic training on personal services contracts. Topics include what you need to know to begin reviewing personal service contracts, the requirements for HR professionals, an overview of applicable statutes and Director's Rules, flow charts of the contract review process, and the basics for determining independent contractor status.

Personal Services Contracts PCP Level II is scheduled for **Monday, March 24, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.** Level II is advanced training focused on the required elements of cost comparisons and completion of the cost comparison form, as well as the appropriate application of pertinent statutes and Director's Rules.

Both Levels I & II are required for certification in addition to a six-month practicum. To register, contact Carmen Schrimpscher at 303.866.2391 or carmen.schrimpscher@state.co.us. Seating is limited. Questions on course content should be referred to Joi Simpson at 303.866.5496 or joj.simpson@state.co.us.

To view other training available through the Total Compensation Unit, please visit our Web site at colorado.gov/dpa/dhr/train/index.htm. Look under HR Professionals only. Classes are scheduled on an as needed basis and not on a predetermined schedule. You may get on a waiting list by contacting Carmen Schrimpscher at 303.866.2391 or Carmen.schrimpscher@state.co.us.

NEW STAFF JOINS COMPENSATION BUSINESS UNIT

The Compensation Unit in DHR welcomes its newest member, Kirsten Jahn-Elfton. Kirsten joined the unit from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). Kirsten began her career with CDOT in 1998 and brings an extensive human resources background to DHR. Kirsten may be reached at 303-866-4231 or Kirsten.Jahn-Elfton@state.co.us.